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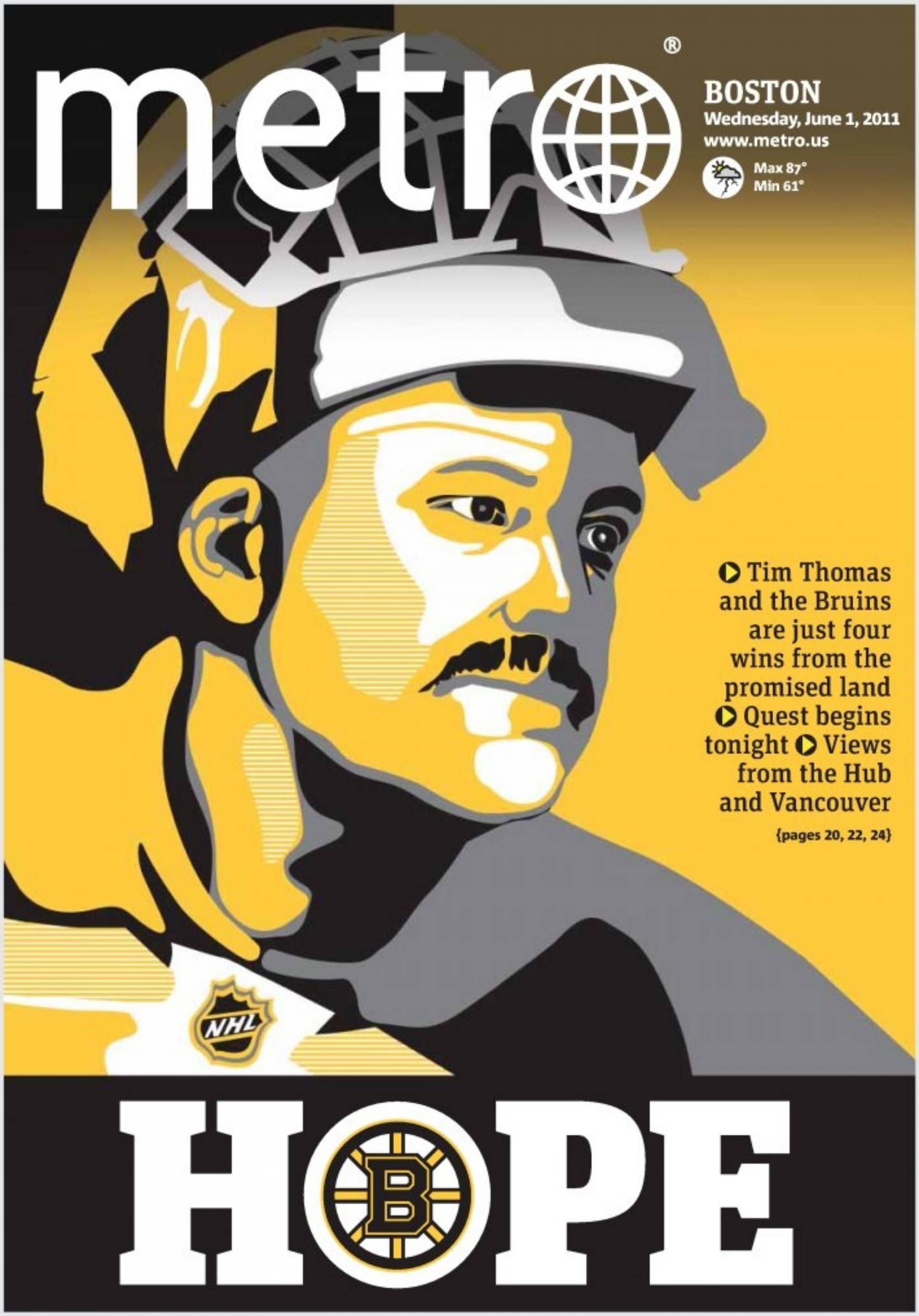

- Tim Thomas and the Bruins are just four wins from the promised land
- Quest begins tonight
- Views from the Hub and Vancouver

{pages 20, 22, 24}

HOPE

News

Hold the phone: Cancer risk

- WHO says gadgets could raise risk of brain tumors
- But new warnings weak at best, similar to coffee and pickles

{page 06}

Brad Pitt is the man, literally

Jolie takes a moment to confirm the gender of her husband, for some reason {page 11}

'First Grader' changes Harris

Actress Naomie Harris on a role that she would like to be able to play in real life {page 13}

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A dangerous time to deliver

Spike of delivery driver robberies hits Boston ◗ Police, city kick off training program to keep operators safe ◗ Cops say many of the incidents were staged ◗ Some drivers say they get taunts, but don't fear the streets

NICOLAUS CZARNECKI/METRO

▶ Michael Ridge Jr. delivers pizza for Papa Johns in Dorchester.

It's been a dangerous few weeks to be a delivery driver in Boston.

Twenty drivers have been robbed since the start of April, and last year a driver was killed by a group of young people that allegedly conspired to rob him when he made his delivery.

In response to the death and spike in overall delivery crime, city officials yesterday launched a training program that aims to help keep drivers safe.

"A lot of these are staged or set up," said Sgt. Detective Dan Coleman.

The program was attended by some drivers and business owners who were offered advice to avoid suspicious or unknown numbers and to leave their car lights aimed at delivery locations.

"We know you work hard to make a little extra for your families. We're here to work with you to make sure you're safe."
MAYOR THOMAS MENINO

Officials dubbed the program "Operation Safe Delivery." It's an initiative by Mayor Thomas Menino who was directly affected by last year's murder of driver Richel Nova. Nova's daughters worked in Menino's office.

"We know you work hard to make a little extra for your families," Menino said. "We're here to work with you to make sure you're safe."

For new driver Michael Ridge, Jr., he said he realizes there's a danger that comes with the job and already knows what drivers should do if confronted.

"You get people who run their mouth, say 'Hey, give me that pizza,'" Ridge said while on his way to a delivery in Dorchester yesterday. "You ignore them."

MICHAEL NAUGHTON
michael.naughton@metro.us

118
Number of drivers robbed since start of 2009.

Recent robberies

- **While leaving his car** to make a delivery in Mattapan, a driver was robbed by a man with a gun just after midnight April 19. After investigating the phone number of the caller, police arrested a 22-year-old Boston man for the crime.
- **A delivery driver** for a Chinese food restaurant was robbed in South Boston on April 22 by a man who approached him, punched him and took his wallet — which contained $600.
- **A 19-year-old** from Dorchester and a 20-year-old from Roxbury were duped by police when they called two days in a row to try and rob a delivery driver on May 23.

Quoted

"We expect modest sales at least to begin, but any dollar we can bring in is one less dollar we have to take in through our traditional means."
MBTA GM RICH DAVEY, ON WFXT, TALKING ABOUT TODAY'S LAUNCH OF THE T'S ONLINE STORE WWW.MBTAGIFTS.COM

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WALNUTS NAMED HEALTHIEST NUTS

Menino makes Cup bet

BOSTON. Mayor Thomas Menino doesn't seem to like the bet ideas pouring in to the Vancouver mayor's office ahead of the first Stanley Cup finals game.

The Canadian mayor took to Twitter to ask for suggestions, which have ranged from the loser wrestling a bear or shaving his head.

Menino had a different idea.

"East Coast versus West Coast seafood face-off," Menino said, issuing his bet.

The bet is not yet official, as the two mayors are currently working out the finer details. METRO

Flap over slap on JetBlue

BOSTON. A New York man accused of slapping a flight attendant on board a Boston-bound JetBlue plane will not face charges in Massachusetts, authorities said yesterday.

Bryan Garnett, 48, allegedly slapped the flight attended while the plane was on the ground in West Palm Beach, Fla., authorities said. He was arrested when the plane landed at Logan Airport Tuesday morning. METRO

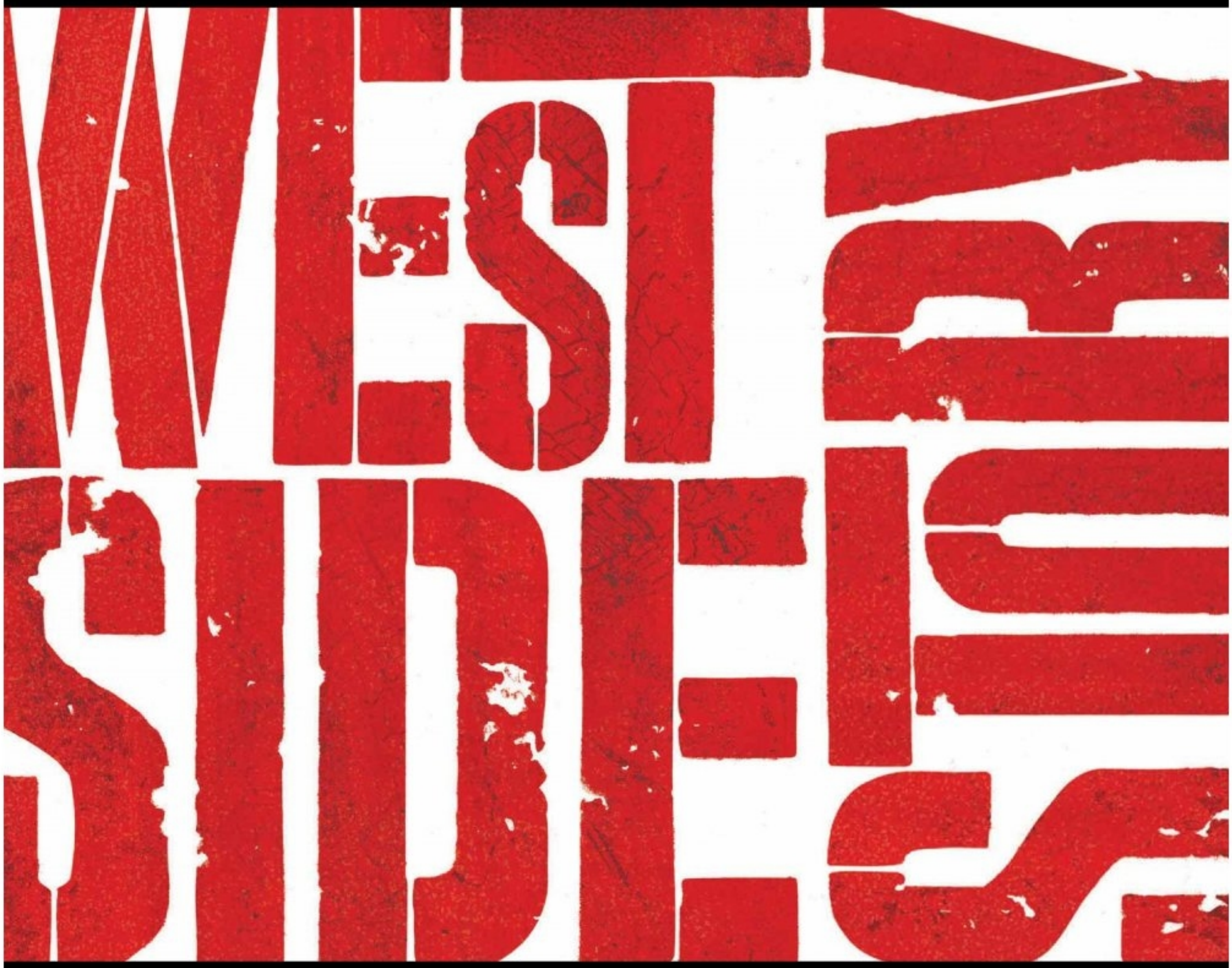
Arraigned for hitting trooper

BOSTON. A Weymouth woman who allegedly hit a State Police trooper while driving drunk was released yesterday on $5,000 bail and ordered to attend weekly alcohol counseling.

Cara Dellabarba, 28, was driving the wrong way on Morrissey Boulevard just after midnight on Saturday when she hit the cruiser, authorities said.

She allegedly tried to flee the scene. METRO

"BOLD, FRESH AND TRANSCENDENT."
- THE NEW YORKER



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More police on Southie beach

Mayor says it's State Police responsibility State Police said holiday fights grew because of social media

After a crowd of hundreds had to be dispersed from Carson Beach following a fight Monday, Boston Mayor Thomas Menino said city police will assist State Police there, although the beach is state jurisdiction.

"Their tactics have to be in line with Boston Police tactics," said Menino, who spoke during a news conference on other matters yesterday. He repeatedly said the area was State Police jurisdiction.

State Police said the "unprecedented volume" of young people who gathered at the beach Monday led to the now indefinite surge in police presence in South Boston.

▶ Carson Beach

"State Police resources will be flexible and mobile and … will be able to respond quickly to any areas where trouble occurs," State Police said.

Police said they had to disperse hundreds of young people from the beach and nearby T stations each day between Friday and Monday. On Sunday and Monday, State Police said more than 1,000 young people were at the beach and the crowd grew because of the use of text messages and social networking sites to "coordinate their presence."

However, Menino disagreed with the estimate and said the crowd was maybe in the hundreds.

Nine arrests were made over the long weekend.

MICHAEL NAUGHTON
michael.naughton@metro.us

NICOLAUS CZARNECKI/METRO

Finals tickets. Like hotcakes

▶ Bruins fans lined up outside the Garden yesterday to buy Stanley Cup finals tickets.

Get your Stanley Cup tickets here

Hundreds of Bruins fans camped outside the TD Garden yesterday for a chance to buy coveted Stanley Cup finals tickets. Fans lined up hours, and for some days, before the box office opened at 11 a.m. The online ticket supply was limited, so the team has offered a "second chance" drawing for the opportunity to buy two tickets worth just under $1,000 total. Ticket prices online ranged from $325 to $850 each. Games 3, 4 and 6 will be played at the Garden, starting June 8. METRO

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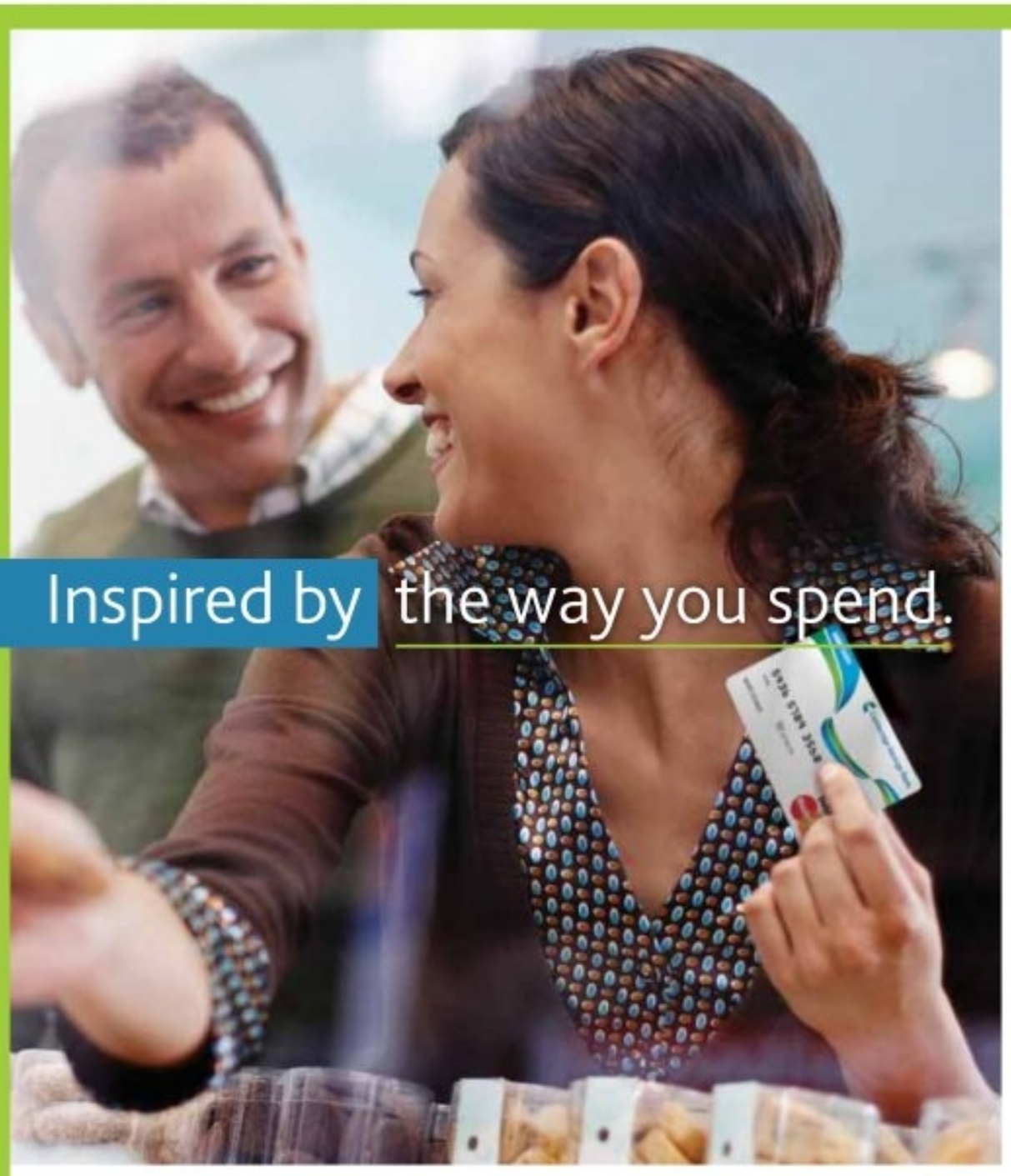

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Gaddafi: I won't leave my country

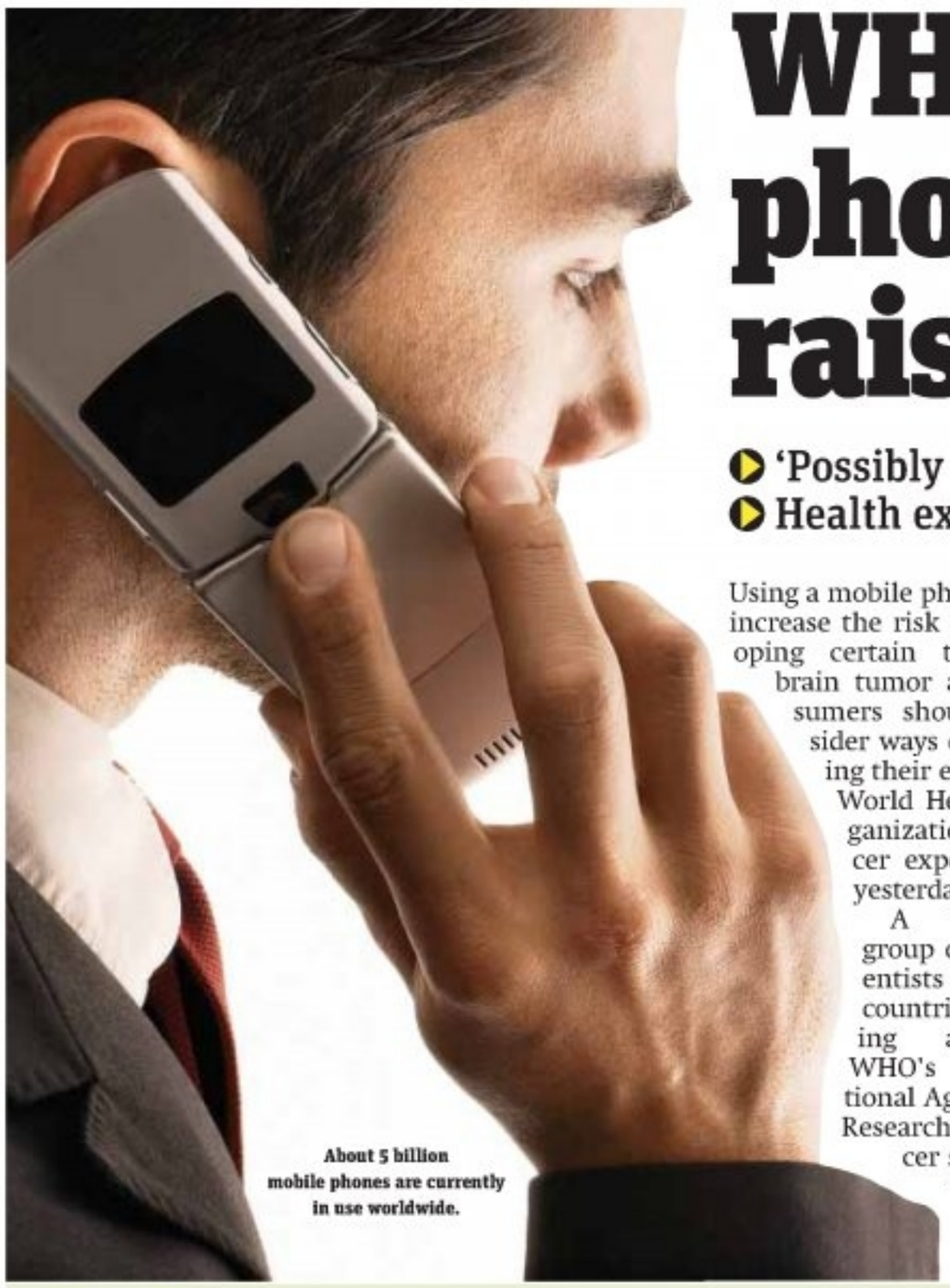
TRIPOLI. Muammar Gaddafi is emphatic he will not leave Libya, South African President Jacob Zuma said yesterday after talks with the Libyan leader that left prospects for a negotiated end to the conflict looking dim.

But new questions emerged over how long Gaddafi could hold on after a senior United Nations aid official said shortages of food and medicine in areas of Libya controlled by Gaddafi amounted to a "time bomb." REUTERS

Karzai: Ally needed, not occupation

KABUL. President Hamid Karzai warned NATO-led forces in Afghanistan yesterday they were at risk of being seen as an occupying force rather than an ally after a spate of civilian casualties, and he said he would take unspecified "action" if they continue.

Raids on Afghan homes in pursuit of insurgents were "not allowed," and the patience of the Afghan people with the tactic had run out, Karzai said, underlining the challenge of winning popular support for an increasingly violent war. REUTERS



About 5 billion mobile phones are currently in use worldwide.

WHO says cell phone use could raise cancer risk

- 'Possibly carcinogenic,' WHO urges reduced exposure
- Health experts say more research needed on links

Using a mobile phone may increase the risk of developing certain types of brain tumor and consumers should consider ways of reducing their exposure, World Health Organization cancer experts said yesterday.

A working group of 31 scientists from 14 countries meeting at the WHO's International Agency for Research on Cancer said a review of all the available scientific evidence suggested cell phone use should be classified as "possibly carcinogenic."

The classification, which puts mobile phone use in the same broad IARC cancer risk category as lead, chloroform and coffee, could spur the United Nations health body to look again at its guidelines on mobile phones, the scientists said.

But more lengthy and detailed research is needed before a more definitive answer on any link can be given.

The WHO had previously said there was no established evidence for a link between cell phone use and cancer.

"After reviewing essentially all the evidence that is relevant ... the working group classified radio-frequency electromagnetic fields as possibly carcinogenic to humans," Jonathan Samet, chair of the IARC group, said in a telebriefing.

He said some evidence suggested a link between an increased risk for glioma, a type of brain cancer, and mobile phone use. REUTERS

WRITE TO METRO:
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Damage control

Industry groups instantly sought to play down the decision, stressing that the "possibly carcinogenic" category also includes substances such as pickled vegetables and coffee.

- "This IARC classification does not mean that cell phones cause cancer," said John Walls, vice president of public affairs for the United States-based wireless association CTIA.
- He noted that the IARC working group did not conduct any new research, but reviewed published studies, and said other regulatory bodies such as the U.S. Food and Drug Administration have stated that "the weight of scientific evidence has not linked cell phones with any health problems."

Smoking could kill 8M a year

Tobacco will kill nearly 6 million people this year, including 600,000 nonsmokers, because governments are not doing enough to persuade people to quit or protect others from second-hand smoke, the WHO said yesterday.

Since there is often a lag of many years between when people start smoking and when it affects health, the epidemic of tobacco-related disease and death has just begun, the WHO said. But by 2030, the annual death toll could reach 8 million.

The United Nations health body urged more governments to sign up to implement its tobacco control treaty, warning that if current trends persist, tobacco could cause up to a billion deaths in the 21st century, a dramatic rise from the 100 million deaths it caused in the previous century. REUTERS

Sarkozy's popularity rises but remains low

PARIS. French President Nicolas Sarkozy's lacklustre popularity rating crept up four points to 35 percent in May when his main rival for the 2012 election was knocked out of the race by sexual assault charges, a poll showed yesterday.

The BVA survey found that 35 percent of those surveyed held a "good opinion" of Sarkozy's presidency, up from 31 percent in April, although he still faces a tough re-election battle against a resurgent left. REUTERS

36%

A 36 percent positive rating was the center-right president's best showing in a BVA poll since May 2010.

Mladic arrives in Netherlands

▶ Mladic

ROTTERDAM. Former Bosnian Serb military commander Ratko Mladic was extradited to the Netherlands yesterday to face genocide charges at the U.N. war crimes tribunal in The Hague after 16 years on the run.

The 69-year-old former general landed in Rotterdam in the early evening in a Serbian government jet that was hauled into a hangar, out of sight of the media, after losing his final legal appeal in Belgrade earlier in the day. REUTERS

Berlusconi's lawyers want sex trial moved

MILAN. Italian Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi's trial on charges he paid for sex with an underage prostitute and abused his power to cover it up should be moved to a special ministerial tribunal, his lawyers said yesterday.

Berlusconi, on an official trip to Romania and fresh from a stinging defeat in local elections, did not attend the trial's second hearing in a Milan court, which his lawyers argue has no right to preside over the case. REUTERS

▶ Berlusconi

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Yaḥya Ibrāhīm

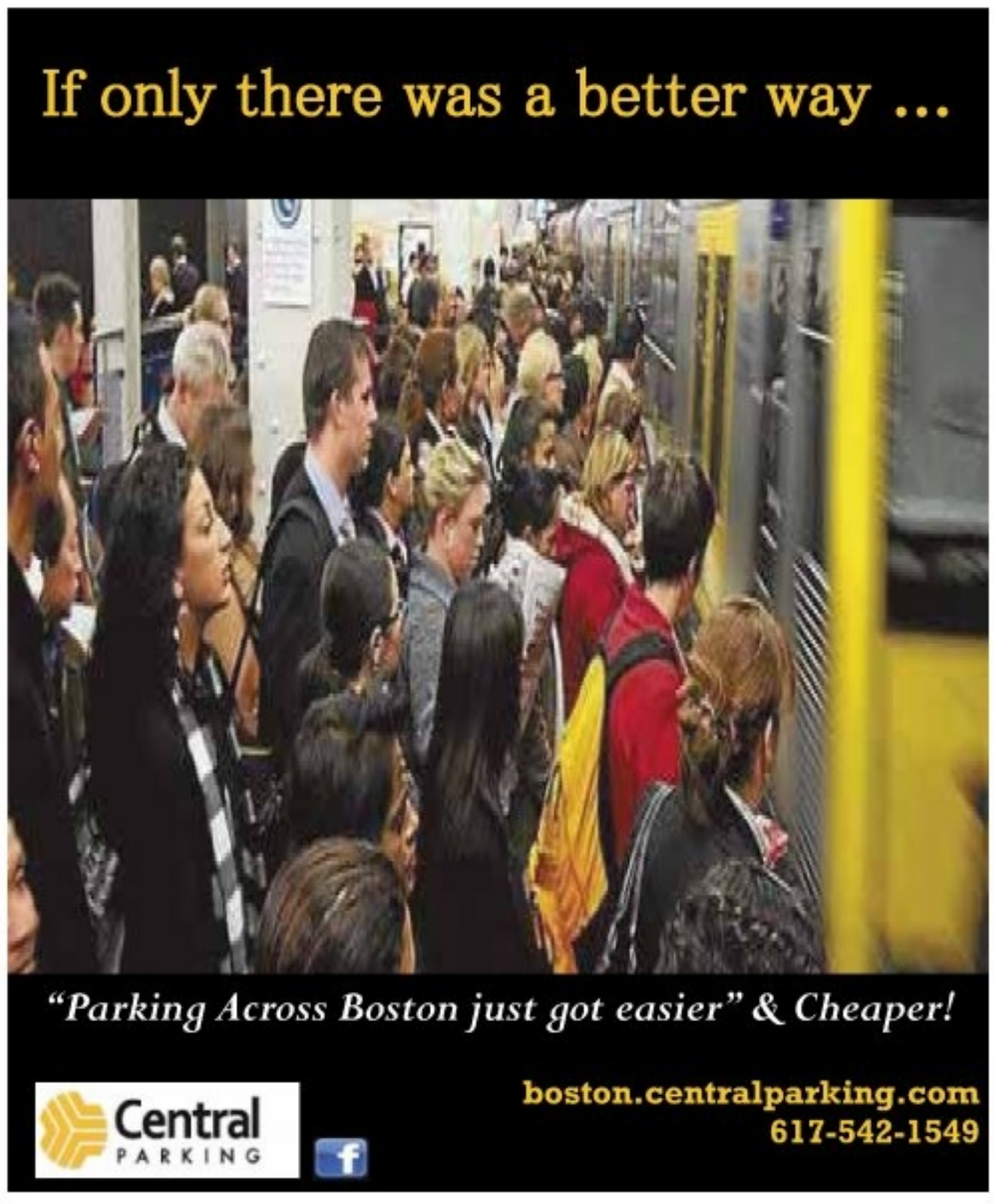
Bin Laden's young colleagues take now produces glossy zines and catchy

The terrorists' goal: Being so cool

Think Osama bin Laden was media-savvy? Just look at Anwar al-Awlaki. The 40-year-old imam wears traditional Muslim garb; but unlike bin Laden, he's fluent in English. And in his YouTube sermons, he effortlessly mixes Islamic doctrine with colloquial references to U.S. pop culture.

In fact, al-Awlaki is American. Born in New Mexico, he attended college in Colorado, received a master's degree in California and started doctoral studies in Washington, DC. He's also the public face of al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP), al Qaeda's most powerful franchise. His sermons on everything from marriage to paradise get up to 100,000 views. (Typical comment: "This Sheikh is awesome!!!") Thanks to his success on YouTube, al-Awlaki is now considered a top candidate to be al Qaeda's next leader.

"Al-Awlaki is a paradox," notes Dr. Sajjan Gohel, international security director at the Asia-Pacific Foundation, a London think tank. "He was arrested twice in the United States for soliciting prosti-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WAR

his message to next level ◕ Al Qaeda YouTube sermons — all in English that young people pay attention

Quoted

"Al-Awlaki has twice been arrested for soliciting prostitutes, but he's developed a reputation as bin Laden's successor."
DR. SAJJAN GOHEL

tutes, but he has developed a reputation as bin Laden's successor. He's dangerous because he understands the Western mindset and is skilled at using modern media."

Welcome to al Qaeda 2.0. AQAP and other jihadist groups now create videos and online chat rooms; they make sleek media productions on the Internet. Last year, for example, AQAP launched Inspire, a glossy English-language publication. The online magazine features catchy headlines, lots of photos, quotes by American celebrities and articles such as "Mujaheddin for beginners" and "Make a bomb in your mom's kitchen." It's edited by Samir Khan, a young former New Yorker.

"He's a very smooth, irreverent young guy, and a good graphic designer," notes Scott Stewart, a vice president at intelligence firm Stratfor who worked on the investigation of al Qaeda's 2000 attack on the USS Cole, which killed 17 Americans. "The new al Qaeda is trying to reach younger people by appearing cool and hip."

Earlier this year, AQAP launched Shamikha, an online magazine for women. Its niche: beauty tips mixed with articles with titles like: "How to marry a jihadist."

Al Qaeda's new generation of leaders have also studied Jack Welch-style management techniques.

"They've built up an impressive archive of self-studies and strategic analysis reports, available on jihadist Web forums, where members offer and advise on how to improve the terror organization's success," notes James Forest, former director of terrorism studies at the United States Military Academy. "Their much-used book, 'Management of Savagery,' argues that future al Qaeda leaders must correct organizational problems and create better propaganda."

ELISABETH BRAW
METRO WORLD NEWS IN LONDON

The new Afghanistan

YEMEN. Since 2004, when the U.K. expelled him, Anwar al-Awlaki has lived in Yemen. That's where al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) is based.

"AQAP has eclipsed the core al Qaeda," says Dr. Sajjan Gohel of the the Asia-Pacific Foundation. "Today the core al Qaeda is an Egyptian-Libyan group with power struggles. Their finances are drying up and the U.S. has slowly been killing off its leaders. AQAP doesn't have that problem."

AQAP's mostly Yemeni and Saudi members and can operate freely in Yemen, which has replaced Afghanistan as a terrorist haven. "Terrorism is very cheap and easy when you're based in Yemen," says Scott Stewart, a former CIA investigator. MWN/EB

60 seconds

▶ Weiman

TAKING TERROR ONLINE

Gabriel Weimann, University of Haifa

Why should we take notice of Samir Khan?
He combines a Muslim background with a U.S. background. He runs several websites and blogs and now two online magazines. In truth, what Khan does is something that almost every teenager could do.

Who's the target audience?
The West. What Khan produces is basically al Qaeda for the U.S. That tells us that AQAP is trying to recruit Muslims in the West. You don't need many people to carry out an attack; Major Nidal Hassan, who killed 13 people at Fort Hood, acted alone.

How does having American spokesmen benefit al Qaeda?
Just like in WWII, propaganda is much more effective when you use native speakers.
MWN/EB

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Apple's Jobs to show face

CALIFORNIA. Apple Chief Executive Steve Jobs, who spent months on medical leave, will open an annual developers' conference next week showcasing the iPad maker's latest computer software and a new cloud computing service.

Apple's shares rose almost 2 percent after it said yesterday that Jobs, along with a team of executives, will deliver the keynote speech at the June 6 conference. It was unclear if the CEO is returning from medical leave, however.

An appearance by Jobs, a survivor of a rare form of pancreatic cancer, would mark one of the few occasions he has showed up in public on the company's behalf since going on medical leave. REUTERS

Sony fixes still lagging across Asia

JAPAN. Sony Corp said yesterday it was not certain when it could fully restore PlayStation Network videogame services in Japan, Hong Kong and South Korea, five weeks after a massive network security breach forced the company to shut them down.

Sony's delayed response to the attack and a series of other network security problems has sparked criticism from governments and experts and threatens an online strategy meant to unite the sprawling electronics conglomerate. REUTERS

Economy on the brink: Will the US double dip?

▶ With many indicators pointing downward, economists ask: Will it last?

- Financial info points toward extension of downturn
- Home prices, consumer activity suffering across US

Data showing a double-dip in home prices, pessimistic consumers and a slowdown in regional manufacturing raised concerns yesterday that the U.S. economy's soft patch could become protracted.

"The question is, 'Is the softer data we're seeing transitory, or is it likely to persist throughout the remainder of 2011?' Right now, that's an open question that investors are trying to figure out," said Michael Sheldon, chief market strategist at RDM Financial in Connecticut.

A drop in a barometer of business activity in the U.S. Midwest added to other regional reports that have pointed to slower growth in manufacturing this month amid supply chain disruptions from the major earthquake in Japan in March.

1.8%

The U.S. economy grew at a tepid 1.8 percent annual rate in the first three months of the year, and these fresh signs suggest the recovery is still struggling to gain momentum.

The Institute for Supply Management-Chicago business barometer dropped to 56.6 in May from 67.6 in April, its lowest reading since November 2009.

The consumer also appears to be struggling with data last week showing consumer spending was crimped by high gasoline prices in April.

Yesterday's manufacturing data bodes poorly for a national factory report due today, and casts a cloud ahead of a report on national employment on Friday.

"While weakness in manufacturing may simply reflect auto parts shortages, this is the fifth regional manufacturing index to fall sharply in May," wrote Chris Low, chief economist at FTN Financial. REUTERS

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Credit Card Debt?

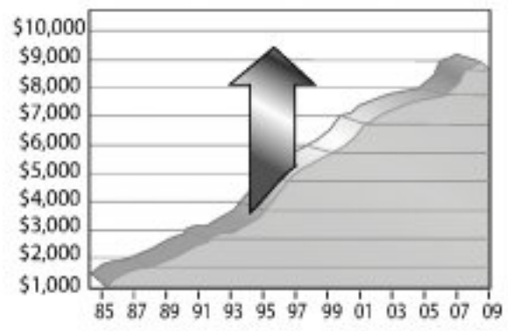
ADVERTORIAL

Solutions that can help you get out of debt.

Tom Hill
CGA STAFF WRITER

Every three minutes another person falls behind on credit card debt. It's no wonder, since every major credit card company has nearly doubled the minimum monthly payment on consumers' bills. Federal Regulators forced the change because of their concern about the growing mountain of consumer debt, which stands at $2.17 trillion. Many consumers can only pay the minimum payment, which can take up to 30 years to pay off. Now, relief is in sight for millions of Americans.

U.S. CREDIT CARD DEBT PER HOUSEHOLD ($)



(Data Source: U.S. Federal Reserve)

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One such case is Sandra L. who proclaimed *"CreditGUARD cut my monthly payment by $656 and saved me over $29,206.53 in interest. They saved my way of life and gave me back my piece of mind! Now I can see myself on my way to becoming debt free."* or Jeffery C. who said *"CreditGUARD of America helped me consolidate 3 of my credit cards into one affordable payment. They are now saving me nearly $200 a month. Now I will be debt free in 2 years or less"*

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myentertainment

THE WORD

Metro's **Dorothy Robinson** shares her take on the world of gossip @dorothyatmetro dorothy.robinson@metro.us

Meghan McCain

'Stupid' is as stupid does?

Meghan McCain and **Michael Ian Black** are teaming up to write a book. Meghan, the daughter of Arizona Sen. John McCain, tweeted on Tuesday, "SO EXCITED TO FINALLY ANNOUNCE — I'm writing my next book with a gosh darned Democrat." The duo will also travel across the country to promote the humor book, titled "Stupid for America," to talk to Americans about politics and to find out why, as the publisher put it, the system is "so f—ed up."

Wait. Isn't that exactly what **Sarah Palin** is doing right now on her "One Nation" bus tour? With all of these brilliant minds traversing the country to find out why our political system is broken, you'd think we'd have the answer by now.

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DOROTHY ROBINSON'S WORD BLOG

Jolie just can't stop gushing

Everyone gets it, **Angelina Jolie**. You're an incredibly lucky woman. And after six years together, during which their family has grown to six children, the actress can't stop gushing about boyfriend **Brad Pitt**. "I am very lucky with Brad," she tells the Telegraph. "He's got the wonderful balance of being an extraordinary, great, loving father, a very, very intelligent man and physically he's a real man … in all things that it means," she adds, blushing. I don't know what that means. Is Jolie trying to tell us that Pitt doesn't have a uterus? We knew that already — right?

GUSTAVO CABALLERO/GETTY IMAGES

Celeb. Sighting

▶ Williams on Monday.

Williams shows support

Serena Williams was snapped leaving Jackson Memorial Hospital after visiting hip-hop star Sean Kingston on Monday night in Miami. Kingston seems to be recovering after running into a bridge while jet-skiing on Sunday. "They have a tube down his throat so he can't really talk, but he is lucid and understands what's going on," Cassandra Sanchez, who was with Kingston at the time of the accident, tells TMZ.com.

Talking points

Lohan under house arrest

Lindsay Lohan will be spending the next month or so under house arrest at her swanky Venice Beach home — and while it's far from prison, her sentence isn't without rules, according to People magazine. While she can have unlimited visitors and phone and Internet access, Lohan can only leave the premises for medical appointments or visits to the probation department, as long as advance notice is given. The troubled actress even has to put her court-ordered community service on hold until after her house arrest sentence is completed.

▶ Lohan

Cole out of a job, times two

After her embarrassingly public dismissal from the U.S. edition of "X Factor," it doesn't look likely **Cheryl Cole** will return to the British version of the show, either, even though producers have reached out, offering an "olive branch," according to the Daily Mail. "Cheryl will not be returning to the British 'X Factor,'" a source says. "She hasn't returned phone calls. And you can't exactly negotiate with someone who won't even speak to you."

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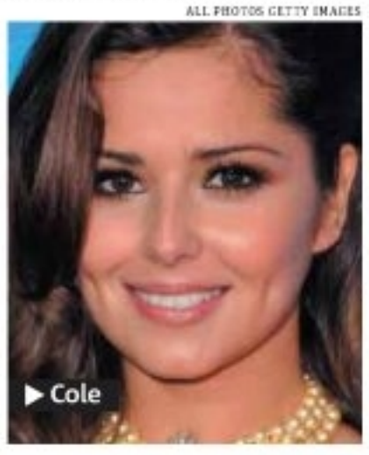
▶ Cole

Baena's family turns on her

Patty Baena, the mother of **Arnold Schwarzenegger**'s illegitimate child, is reportedly feeling abandoned by her own family, as relatives have been selling pictures and stories to the tabloids one by one, according to TMZ. One relative who hasn't sold Baena out yet tells the website that the ex-wife of another family member is the one spearheading the betrayal, but Baena insists the stories being sold are lies.

2

The feed …

▶ **Checking in with some of Hollywood's biggest names to see what they've been up to — in their own words, in 140 characters or less.**

Patrick Schwarzenegger doesn't understand how famous he is, Nathan Fillion is discovering things about himself, Pam Grier is fielding odd requests and Lindsay Lohan is enjoying her house arrest.

▶ **@PSchwarzenegger** Finally get to eat some sushi again before I'm off to new York tomorrow. Everyone in here knows my name, I think I come eat here too often

▶ **@NathanFillion** I just realized I collect flashlights. Weird.

▶ **@PamGrier** My mom wants a pink scooter! Help us!

▶ **@lindsaylohan** Tron in 3d sony tv!!!!!!!! I am happy! lol xx

Pam Grier

myentertainment

Dax Shepard is a family man

The 'Parenthood' star chats about working with his fiancee Kristen Bell and his new film 'Brother's Justice'

For his directorial debut, "Parenthood" star Dax Shepard decided to take on Hollywood, making a mockumentary about his attempts to ditch comedy and become an action star in the ill-advised "Brother's Justice" — with a little help from friends like Ashton Kutcher, Bradley Cooper and his former agent. But as he made clear during our chat, nothing makes Shepard happier than working with — and heaping praise on — fiancee Kristen Bell.

What made you want to make a Hollywood satire?
Making a Hollywood satire is probably the easiest thing to shoot if you live in L.A. and are friends with lots of actors. It's the equivalent of making an auto movie if you live in Detroit.

Friends — meaning people like Ashton Kutcher and Jon Favreau? What are your relationships with them like?
Super loving, supportive friendships. I look at Hollywood as this opportunity to go through high school all over again, but this time I like everyone. I've gotten along with everyone I've ever worked with, and I try to maintain my friendships. Even like Josh Hutcherson, the young kid who was in "Zathura." I still go out to Bob's Big Boy with him.

Did anyone say no to being in the movie?
No! I was really shocked, because it's a pretty big favor to ask. But I'm not a big favor-asker. I never asked anyone to come help me move or anything like that. And I tried to make it as easy on them as possible.

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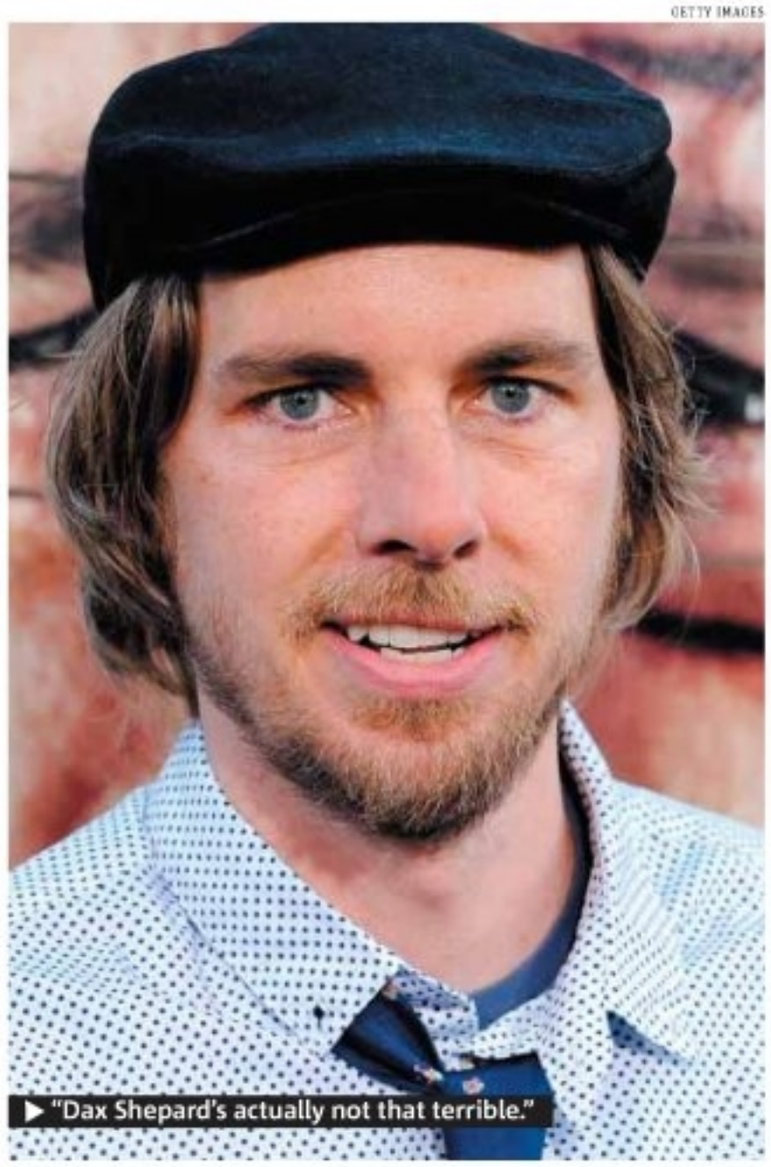

▶ "Dax Shepard's actually not that terrible."

Q&A: Fame

How has life changed since the debut of 'Parenthood'?
People say nice things about me in reviews now. [Laughs] But I noticed there seems to be a pattern where all the positive acclaim came with a disclaimer, like, "I know you're not going to believe this, but Dax Shepard's actually not terrible." ... For my mom, it's nice because people are saying nice things.

Love scenes

On working with Kristen:

▶ **It's heaven.** I love working with Kristen. What's even more fun than acting with Kristen is writing for her. As a writer, you can write anything and Kristen can do it. Whereas when I'm writing for myself, I have to be realistic about what my limitations are. With Kristen, I can write any scene.

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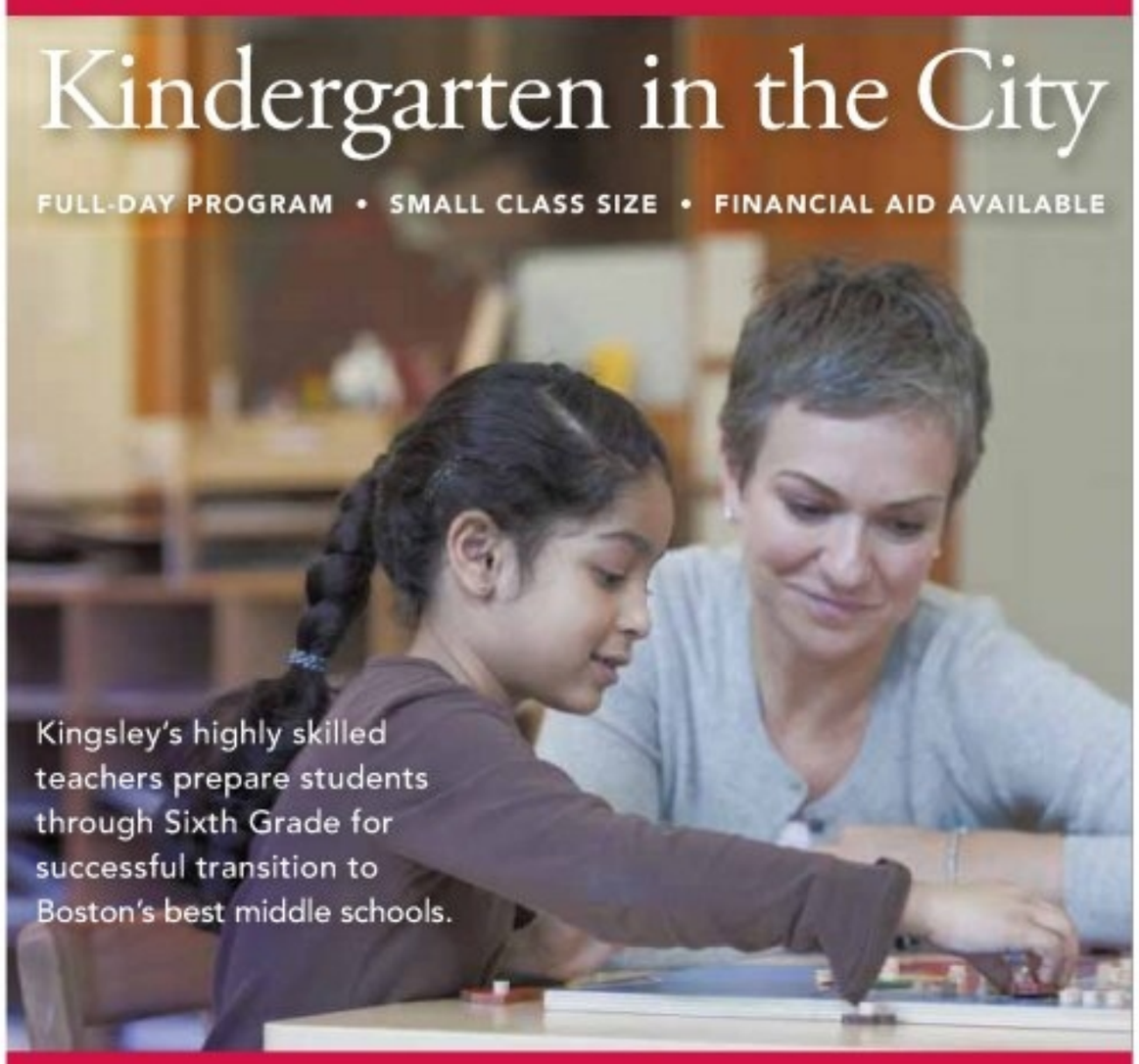

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Out of Africa

Naomie Harris, who first appeared in '28 Days Later,' is back from Africa, where she filmed 'The First Grader,' about a Kenyan teacher who causes a controversy when she helps an old tribesman learn

In "The First Grader," British actress Naomie Harris ("28 Days Later," "Pirates of the Caribbean") stars as Jane Obinchu, a Kenyan teacher who risks her career to help an 84-year-old tribesman who takes the new government's offer of "a free education for everyone" literally. She says taking on the true story provided some interesting challenges for Harris.

"Jane is a very strong character. She is a lot older than me. She is a fighter. She is a survivor." NAOMIE HARRIS

What was it like to portray someone who is still alive?
I felt really scared about meeting Jane, and I kept trying to put it off because if she came in and said, "That is not actually me," or, "That is not how I am," I would have felt really bad about that. But she didn't come until late into filming. She watched me do a scene with the kids and she was like, "You've really got it. You've really captured my essence." It was such a relief. Jane is a very strong character. She is a lot older than me. She is a fighter. She is a survivor.

Do you have anything in your life that you want to fight for?
What I admire about Jane is the fact that she was willing to lay her career on the line, her marriage and her life to guarantee that Maruge gets his education. I don't know that I could have been as strong to do that. I hope I would have been, but I don't know. There is certainly nothing, at the moment, that I would lay my life down for.

▶ Naomie Harris goes back to school for "The First Grader."
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Q&A

Did your time in Kenya change you in any way?

What I generally get from being in Africa is a sense of warmth and openness. As a stranger, you're always welcomed into people's homes and people are always offering you food. Also, in Western society, we look at education as a bit of a chore. I am sure I have been guilty of that myself. When you go somewhere like Kenya and you see how the children don't have pencils and pens — all of these things are considered luxuries — and what a privilege they see education as and how hungry they are to learn ... That definitely stayed with me.

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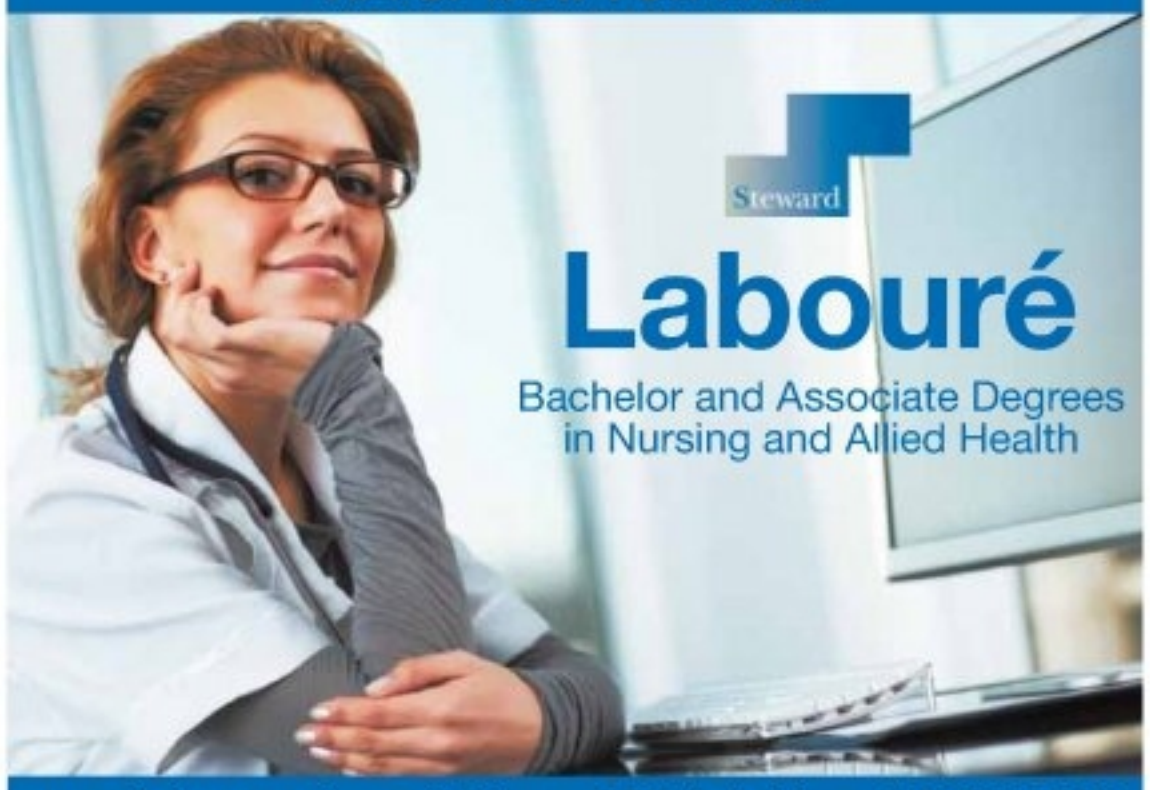

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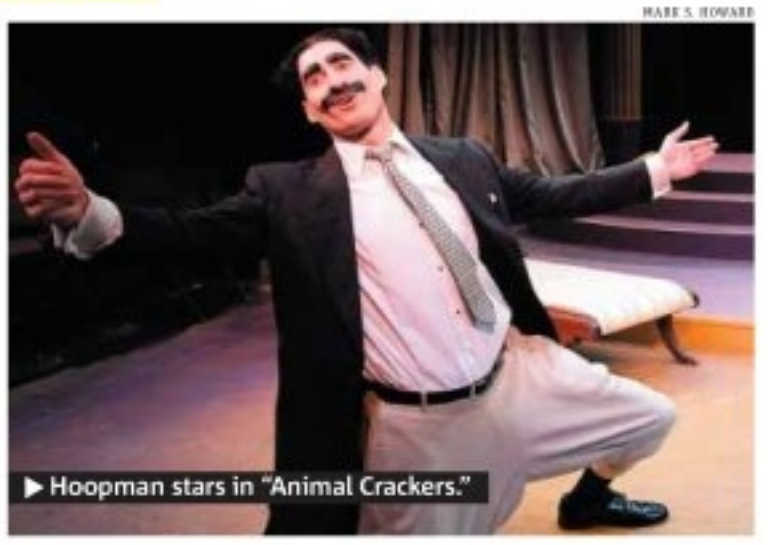
Lyric does not earn high Marx

This rendition of 'Animal Crackers' might even make Groucho grouchy

MARK S. HOWARD



▶ Hoopman stars in "Animal Crackers."

Aside from impeccable performances by Leigh Barrett and Ed Hoopman, the first act of the Lyric Stage Company's production of "Animal Crackers" is tired and lifeless. And it's rife with dull musical numbers that would put you to sleep if not for bad harmonies that make you sit up and take notice.

Act II fares better as Barrett, Hoopman, Aimee Doherty and Nael Nacer manage to create some of the spark that makes Marx Brothers' humor fly. Hoopman's Groucho playing Cpt. Spaulding delivers the infamous silly, pun-laden banter with impeccable timing and a joy that makes you wish they would cut the musical numbers and stick to the shtick.

While they're at it, it wouldn't hurt to cut the superfluous tap dancing, knock 15 minutes off the run time and tighten up the entrances and exits. There's a requisite precision to this humor the production sorely lacks. The jokes should be flying so furiously that you miss some of them. Instead you're left hanging in an exhausting gap, wondering what's taking so long to get to the next funny moment.

Though Barrett flawlessly matches Spaulding's wit with Mrs. Rittenhouse's daffy, society lady cluelessness, Alycia Sacco never quite captures the playful, almost childlike magic of Harpo. The tomfoolery should feel organic, not a byproduct of going for the laugh.

Aimee Doherty delivers the show's most impressive vocals but proves to be too formidable in duets with Jordan Ahnquist and Merissa Czyz, who might benefit from microphones.

If you go

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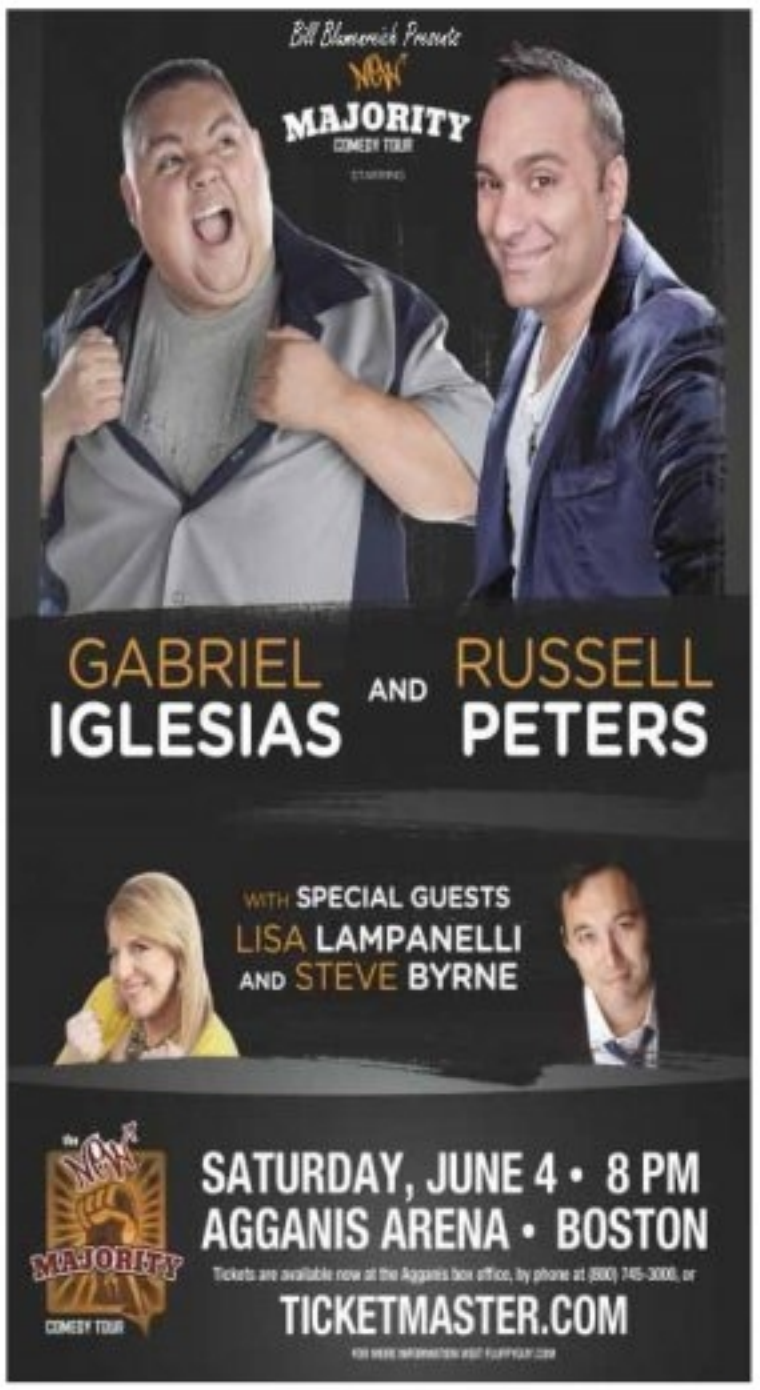

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The joys of throwing like a girl

In new book, Robert Strauss reflects on raising two girls who had no interest in pom-poms

WILLA HOLMAN

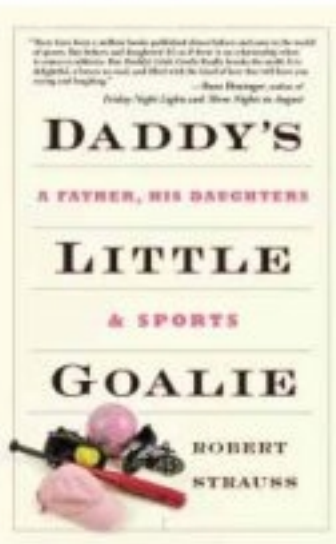
▶ Author Robert Strauss with daughters Sylvia, left, and Ella.

Like all Philadelphia sports fans, Robert Strauss has been through quite a bit. For more than a decade, he's watched as his beloved teams endured rough seasons, promising lineups crumbled and his favorite players didn't always put up the numbers to justify his undying devotion. Not to mention the last-minute snack runs, constant carpool assignments and endless lip-biting required of a dad in the bleachers.

But for Strauss, a former sports journalist, the score (sometimes thankfully) was never the point. His new book, "Daddy's Little Goalie," reflects on supporting his daughters' many, many teams — as well as their musical undertakings and pint-sized political aspirations — across the bridge in Haddonfield, N.J.

"It wasn't about them being the stars — it was about being a dad and getting to sit on the sidelines," he says. "There would be one thing wonderful or one thing goofy, maybe, every game."

Like the time 5-foot Ella was tossed around the court, rag-doll style, in a valiant battle for a jump ball. Or when Sylvia scored her own basketball team's most important point in a 44-to-1 game.



Now, as Ella wraps up her first year of college sans jersey and 16-year-old Sylvia has also hung up her high-tops, it's clear Strauss won't be traveling to any NCAA tournaments over the next couple years. But again, that wasn't the point.

"It would be great to play sports in college, but that's not the end game," he says. "The end game is to be playing sports when you're 59."

MONICA WEYMOUTH
monica.weymouth@metro.us

TV watch list

'The World According to Paris'

REALITY. Out to reclaim the "famous for being famous" crown from the Kardashians, Paris Hilton once again puts her life on display with help in the drama department from boyfriend Cy Waits (aka the guy she got arrested with in Vegas) and new bestie Brooke Mueller (yes, the Brooke Mueller who's fresh from rehab and recently divorced from Charlie Sheen). **Series premiere, 10 p.m., Oxygen**

BRET HARTMAN/OXYGEN

▶ Cy Waits and Paris Hilton party in "The World According to Paris."

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mystyle

Beauty pick

Get wild this summer

What will bring editors out of bed and to a beauty event on a Saturday morning? Runway makeup guru Pat McGrath, that's what. The famed makeup artist and Dolce & Gabbana collaborator was on hand at Saks Fifth Avenue in New York recently to introduce the brand's new "Italian Summertime" collection and its star product: the limited-edition Animalier bronzer. McGrath suggests brushing the powder on your cheeks, forehead, chin and chest. When applied, it gives users a sun-kissed glow.

Dolce & Gabbana Animalier bronzer, $50, www.saks.com

Trends

McGrath on three summer beauty trends you should follow:

- Brows are back
- Super strong color
- Touch of eyeliner

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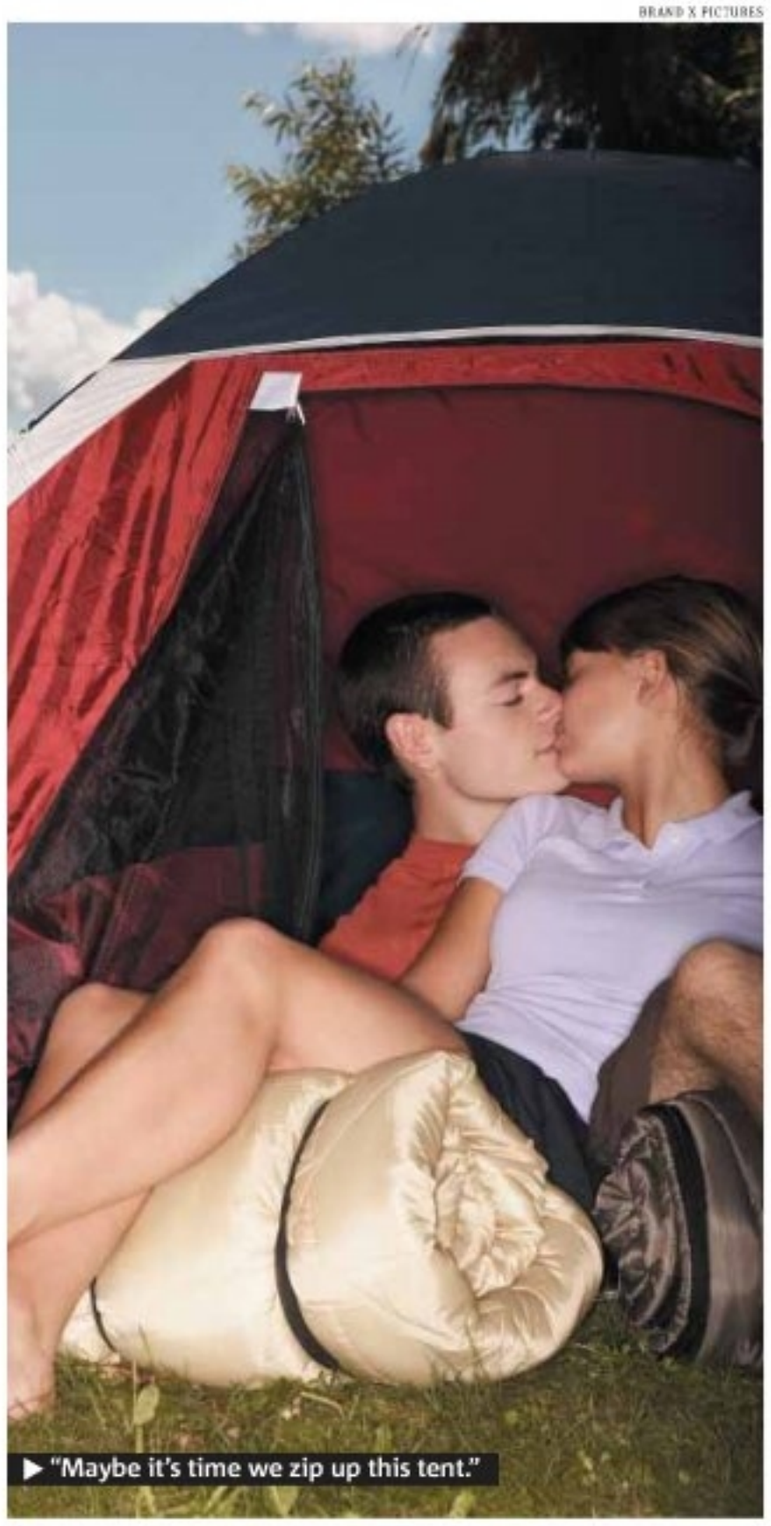

▶ "Maybe it's time we zip up this tent."

6 Rules for getting frisky outdoors

Now that the weather's turning warmer, many people are overcome by two urges: to get outside and to get it on. Two great tastes that taste great together! And so the season of outdoor sex has begun. But it's not all fun and games like naked Slip 'n Slide — there are some practicalities to consider before you answer the call of the wild:

1 Outdoor sex, a subset of public sex, by definition includes the perpetual potential danger of being discovered — that's part of its thrill. But most people don't want to see you doing it. Therefore, you must calculate the risks. Unless the chances of being discovered are next to nil, don't do it.

2 Avoid nudity in public places (unless you're at a nude beach, at college or in Europe). Ladies, wear a skirt or dress and forego the underwear. Your partner will have easier access to some of your fun bits, while being able to maintain a modicum of discretion. Plus, you can make a faster getaway if you're not caught with jeans around your ankles!

3 Bring a blanket to lay down over dirt, rough ground, sand or itchy grass. Poison ivy on your butt is no picnic.

4 Apply sunscreen on any flesh that doesn't usually see the sun (e.g. your pasty bum), making sure not to get any in or around your very private parts.

5 Use a condom. It'll keep everything tidier, especially when there's no running water nearby.

6 Like all good campers, pack in what you pack out. Don't leave any unsightly evidence of your tryst for innocent passersby to stumble upon.

*Em & Lo's latest book is **"SEX: How to Do Everything."** Visit **EMandLO.com** for your daily dose of sex, love and everything in between.*

Bedfellows

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EMandLO.COM

Expert tip

Get too close for comfort

If it's a chilly night, hop in a sleeping bag (or two zipped together) in the missionary position — the close quarters might increase your body-contact ratio, which many women find helpful in their orgasm endeavors.

60% of Metro readers own their current home.
Source: Scarborough R2 2010
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myfitness

You can ring my (kettle) bell

- Despite skepticism, experts say working out with a kettlebell can have stunning results
- University of Wisconsin study finds only other equivalent is cross-country skiing uphill
- Exercises with the 18th-century Russian instrument can work multiple muscle groups

ISTOCK

▶ "I got a fever, and the only prescription is more kettlebell!"

They may look like dumbbells, but make no mistake: The kettlebell is a smart choice for a great workout.

A kettlebell is a cannonball-shaped weight with a thick handle, first made popular among weightlifters in Russia in the 1700s. The 18th-century Russian technology has seen a 21st-century revival at fitness clubs across the United States.

But as with any exercise fad, there were skeptics — including the American Council of Exercise, which conducted a test on the benefits of kettlebell workouts in 2009, with surprising results.

"[Kettlebell proponents] make these all-encompassing claims about increasing your muscular strength, endurance and aerobic capacity, like, 'If you do this, that's all you need to do," said University of Wisconsin physician John Porcari, who conducted the test. "We wanted to see how much of an aerobic workout you really do get."

The results of the study, which tracked 10 volunteers between the ages of 29-46, proved stunning: a 30-minute workout with a kettlebell consistently burned 1,200 calories per hour.

"[It was] off the charts," Porcari said. "That's equivalent to running a 6-minute mile pace. The only other thing I could find that burns that many calories is cross-country skiing uphill at a fast pace."

Another major upside to the kettlebell workout is the efficiency, with exercises such as squats and a two-handed swing working multiple muscle groups.

"We knew it would be extremely intense," said study co-chair and UW physician Chad Schnettler. "You get a big bang for your buck in a very short amount of time."

JEFF GOLDBERG
letters@metro.us

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myletters&games

Letters

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Jail-ternatives worth a look

RE: "FLOGGING VERSUS PRISON: THE DEBATE": Peter Moskos's idea of having the convict choose between physical pain and imprisonment is worth exploring by research. Why theorize about an important topic which could very well form the basis of research, policy and legislation? Ten strokes of the cane cannot possibly be equated to five years of imprisonment, of course, but the idea is still worth pursuing. After all, acceptable social trends change with time. If imprisonment has outlived its usefulness, it seems logical to begin to think in terms of an alternative. Am I wrong?

JOHN DINGA, VIA E-MAIL

Either you like or you don't ...

The Obama plan of privatizing health care for the general public meant the death of freedom of capitalism in America. Meanwhile, the Republican plan of privatizing health care for the elderly brings back the freedom of capitalism in America. Can the right-wingers out there explain this?

SUZY SANDOR, VIA E-MAIL

Patriot Act: Still a crime

Reid and Obama have forced me to buy health insurance for procedures I would never agree to. Sen. Reid does not feel that a judge should be called upon to search your house or records. What is ironic is that Obama was against the Patriot Act, as were most liberals. Now that Obama is in power, he is for it and refuses to restore some of our previous Constitutional safeguards. God bless Sen. Rand Paul for being so articulate in showing Sen. Reid and his ilk for exactly what they are. A lot of men and women died to protect our Constitution and yet you elected both congressmen and senators who gladly took many of your rights away!

JOSEPH DUPONT, VIA E-MAIL

Air pollution exceeds smoke

RE: "SMOKING FEAR SEEMS AMISS": Bravo to James Allocca's secondhand smoke comments. Totally LMAO at his wonderful analogy. However, I would like to add automobile emissions as another deadly problem. I pass by many outdoor cafes where there are "no smoking" signs; traffic is bumper to bumper and yet people are joyously eating their soot-covered food, inhaling those wonderful noxious fumes.

KAL LEBOW, VIA E-MAIL

E-mail your letters: **letters@metro.us**

Keep them as brief as possible, preferably under 100 words. Metro reserves the right to edit all letters. Please include your name and contact information.

Horoscope

♊ Gemini **May 21-June 20.** Your influence over your peers is quite good and growing all the time. A personal desire to develop a strong bond with a certain person could be realized through stick-to-itiveness.

♋ Cancer **June 21-July 22.** When asked, be of assistance to persons who need your help. However, do so without seeking any praise or attention for your efforts, simply out of the kindness of your heart.

♌ Leo **July 23-Aug. 22.** Although your sphere of influence might not extend beyond your close friends and family, it will be considerable when you choose to use it.

♍ Virgo **Aug. 23-Sept. 22.** Either by being challenged through competition or from intense inner motivation, your desire to win will be far stronger than usual. Use it at the right time and for the right purpose.

♎ Libra **Sept. 23-Oct. 23.** In order to find a solution to a present dilemma that has you in a dither, draw upon a similar past experience as to how to handle it wisely and well.

♏ Scorpio **Oct. 24-Nov. 22.** Be a joiner if you can, because your biggest opportunities will come through involvements with others instead of what you can do on your own.

♐ Sagittarius **Nov. 23-Dec. 21.** The small points can be some of the most important ones to study when signing a new agreement. If they are in order, usually the connection will last a very long time.

♑ Capricorn **Dec. 22-Jan. 19.** Everyone knows how good you are at handling many situations simultaneously when you have to. Once again, you might show the world how to juggle several balls at one time.

♒ Aquarius **Jan. 20-Feb. 19.** Your custodial instincts are extremely pronounced, and you'll be careful when putting anything important together. You'll protect those for whom you're responsible.

♓ Pisces **Feb. 20-March 20.** Don't waste your time on situations or projects that are of no or little importance. You're in a time period in which you can complete complicated situations to your satisfaction.

♈ Aries **March 21-April 19.** You're not likely to find a better day to spend some time catching up on old correspondence than today.

♉ Taurus **April 20-May 20.** Certain financial prospects look particularly good concerning some investments that have gone through more lows than ups. It might be the day to transfer some funds.

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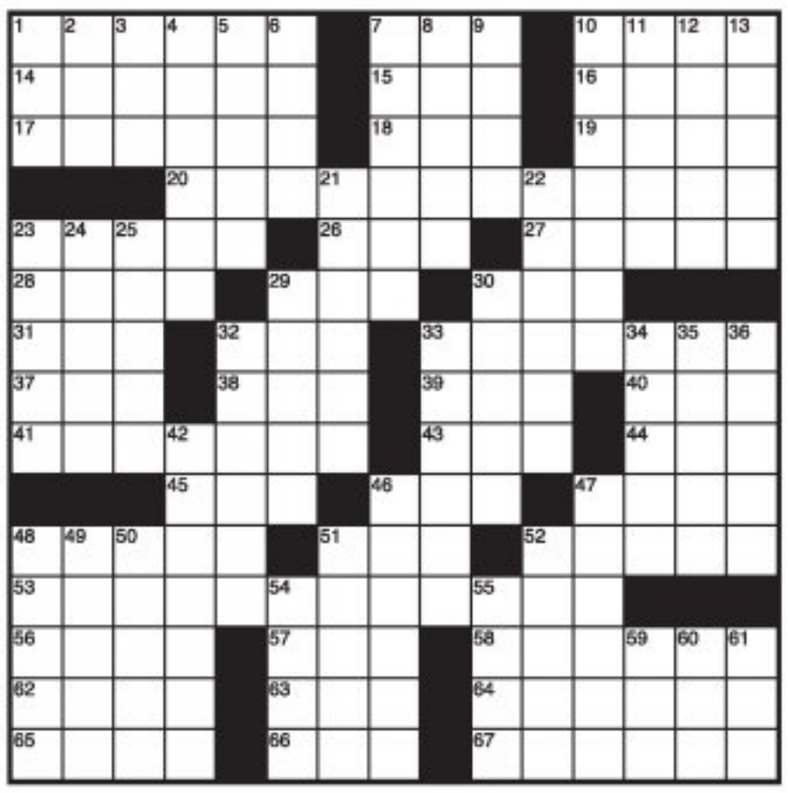
23 Tense
26 Kind of PC screen
27 Docks
28 Pub orders
29 Stir-fry pan
30 Form 1040 info
31 Homer Simpson epithet
32 Cornfield sound
33 Elegant coiffure
37 Twilight, to a poet
38 Versatile vehicle
39 Aberdeen kid
40 Chill
41 Harvest goddess
43 "__ to the West Wind"
44 Do alterations
45 Chemin de __ (casino game)
46 Stage prompt
47 Good buy
48 Flips pages
51 Convened
52 Damp
53 Racing after (3 wds.)
56 __ -do-well
57 Pamplona yell
58 Added cloves
62 Latin I verb
63 Harper Valley org.
64 Signify
65 Retina cells
66 RSVP word
67 Fishing enthusiast

Down
1 Explorer's need
2 "Double Fantasy" artist
3 Explosive letters
4 Breathes hard
5 Had status
6 Like a bump on __ __
7 "Alas, poor __ ..."
8 Feasted
9 Healthy hunk
10 Swerving
11 Snorkel, to Beetle
12 Willow shoot
13 Looks curiously
21 Scowl
22 Positive aspect
23 Walked in water
24 "__ __ a Parade"
25 Change the length
29 Natural resource
30 Partial darkness
32 Most doll-like
33 Socks hard
34 Japanese American
35 Globe feature
36 Afresh
42 Tries
46 Boxed breakfast
47 Carbon 14 job
48 Steamship
49 January in Acapulco
50 Out in front
51 Prefix for media
52 Age on the vine
54 Cold drinks
55 Farmer's org.
59 Mil rank.
60 Bastille Day season
61 "The," to Fritz



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SUDOKU **LEVEL: EASY**

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	7				6	5	3	
			7		5			
	2	5	8				4	
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						7		

SUDOKU **LEVEL: HARD**

Solution to yesterday's crossword

E	Y	R	E		R	A	J	A	H		E	L	K	S
R	O	A	D		E	V	A	D	E		N	O	A	H
A	R	I	D		T	E	N	O	R		Y	O	Y	O
S	E	N	I	O	R			B	E	R	A	T	E	D
			E	L	I		P	E	S	O				
G	R	I	D	D	E	R	S			O	C	T	E	T
R	A	G			V	I	I			F	O	A	M	Y
A	L	L	U	D	E	D		D	U	S	T	M	O	P
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P	H	O	N	E				A	S	C	E	N	D	E	D
				P	O	K	Y		L	A	O			
W	A	I	T	S	O	N			O	R	B	I	T	S
A	H	S	O		Z	E	R	O	S		L	O	B	O
V	O	L	E		E	L	O	P	E		E	T	A	L
E	Y	E	D		S	T	E	E	D		R	A	R	E

How to play Sudoku: Fill in the grid so that every row, every column and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1-9. There is no math involved. You solve the puzzle with reasoning and logic.

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In baseball

Crawford best of week in AL

Carl Crawford was named the AL Player of the Week for the period ending May 29. He hit .423 with two doubles, two triples and three home runs. METRO

Is the Bruins' long wait finally over?

It's been 39 years since Boston hoisted the Stanley Cup It's theirs this time with just four more wins

On the air tonight

Game 1: Bruins at Vancouver
8 p.m., NBC, 98.5 FM

The waiting has been the hardest part. Twenty-one years since the Bruins last played for the Stanley Cup. Not since 1972 have they hoisted it.

All of that means little to the players tasked with rewriting that history, starting tonight in Vancouver with Game 1 of the Stanley Cup finals against the Canucks.

For these Bruins, this series caps a four-year odyssey that began with a dramatic Game 6 against Montreal in 2008, three straight devastating Game 7s that followed and two Game 7s that went their way this season, validating a group often maligned for not having the stuff worthy of Stanley.

"We've learned a lot through the course of the season with this group of guys," forward Mark Recchi said. "It's just a matter of going out and playing and enjoying it. This is fun. It's exciting times for everybody."

The Canucks have been the perfect tonic for Cup withdrawal before. In 1994, the Rangers captured their first Cup since 1940 in an epic seven-game series.

But to scratch their 39-year itch, the B's will have to contain a high-flying Vancouver offense, led by talented twins Henrik and Daniel Sedin.

JEFF GOLDBERG
sports@metro.us

BRUCE BENNETT/GETTY IMAGES

▶ Zdeno Chara, Ryan Kesler and Tim Thomas will factor heavily in the Stanley Cup finals, beginning tonight.

Just like against the Lightning

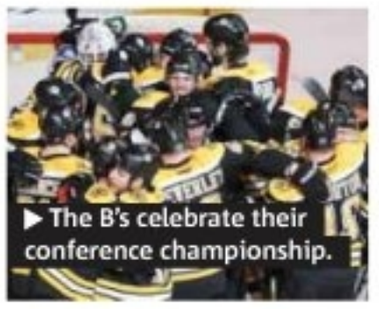
The Bruins would do well to try to emulate last Friday's effort against Vancouver.

Boston beat Tampa Bay 1-0 in a classic Game 7 at the Garden.

How much tougher could Vancouver be?

"I'm sure they're not any faster than the teams we faced before," defenseman Dennis Seidenberg said of the Canucks. "It's just a matter of us to keep going where we ended up, how we ended up playing last game, Game 7, and just build on that.

"Then we're going to be on the right path." METRO



▶ The B's celebrate their conference championship.

Tale of the tape

Game 1 tonight
8 p.m., NBC, 98.5 FM

at

▶ **The line**
Online sportsbook Bodog has the Canucks as a -235 favorite to hoist the Cup. The Bruins clock in as a +195 underdog.

▶ **The keys**
Boston needs to do two things to win it all: Stay physical with Vancouver's scorers and keep out of the penalty box. The Canucks PP is immensely dangerous.

▶ **The pick**
With Tim Thomas in net, anything's possible.
Bruins in seven.

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Point counterpoint

Who will win the Stanley Cup? And why?

We've teamed up with our friends at Metro Vancouver to offer both sides of the debate over the finals.

The question's simple: Who will raise Lord Stanley's cup? And what will lift them to victory?

For the good guys, Metro Boston's Mike Naughton says Tim Thomas will carry the Bruins once again.

But on the West Coast, Metro Vancouver's Matt Kieltkya says the Canucks simply outclass the B's.

Who's right? Who's wrong? Tell us — and read more from Naughton and Kieltkya — online at www.metro.us. METRO

MICHAEL NAUGHTON
METRO BOSTON

Tim Thomas.

That's why the Bruins will win their first Stanley Cup in 39 years.

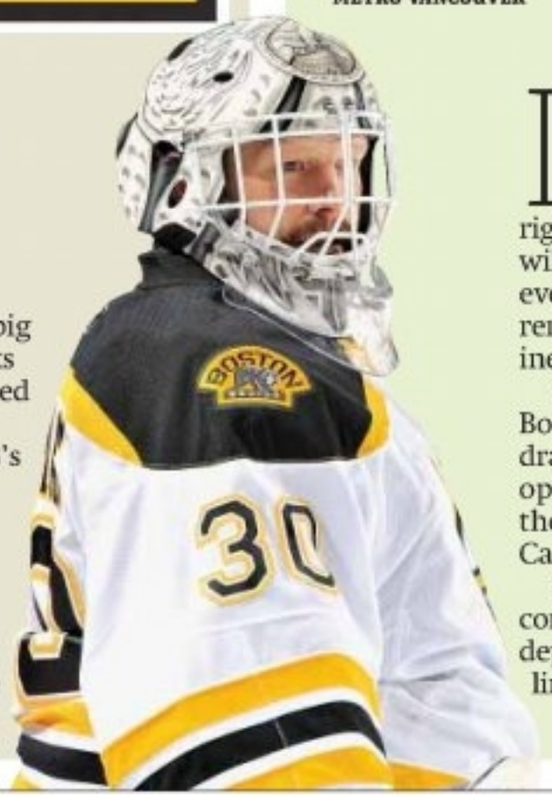
This series will be tough; I'm not going to try to kid anyone. Vancouver has the Sedin brothers, after all. And the Canucks should have an advantage on the power play.

But the B's showed they can execute Claude Julien's defense-first system in Game 7 against Tampa Bay. That system can help negate Vancouver's greatest strength.

And that's why this series comes down to goaltending.

Roberto Luongo is tough; there's no denying he's Thomas' equal. But there's one big difference: The Canucks backstop has been pulled this postseason, while Thomas has been the B's backbone.

Thomas has been waiting years for this opportunity. After the season he's had, don't expect him to let it pass without his name ending up on the Cup.



MATT KIELTKYA
METRO VANCOUVER

It's as true in hockey as it is in boxing: Styles make fights.

If you match up the right opponents, there will be fireworks. But even a tiny mismatch can render one of the fighters ineffective.

Unfortunately for the Boston Bruins, they've drawn the worst opponent possible for their system with the Canucks.

Both teams have comparable goalies, depth and defensive lines.

So the finals will come down to matchups and styles.

That's where the Canucks simply outclass the Bruins.

Boston's tendency to collapse in its own zone and give up weak goals has already nearly cost it against Montreal and Tampa Bay — two very one-dimensional teams.

It will be their undoing against the Canucks.

It's not that the Bruins are a bad team; they'll come out swinging. But Vancouver will KO them in Game 6.

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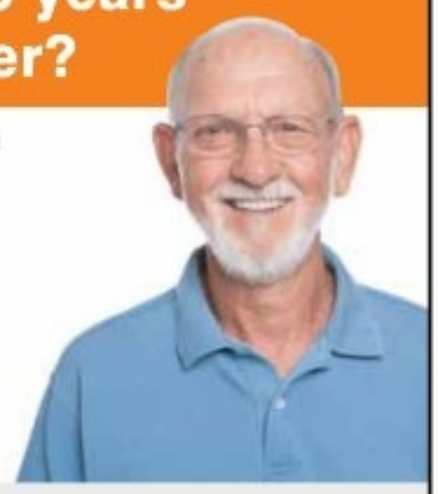

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A few of our favorite beards

The Bruins have been in the playoffs for a month and a half.

That means two things: They're ever-so-close to that elusive Stanley Cup — and they're starting to look pretty shaggy.

The playoff beard might be our favorite tradition in all of sports. No other league could deliver the way the NHL can, either. Every year, we end up with a perfect mix of teenagers with awkward stubble and lumberjack defensemen.

Here's our favorite B's beards. METRO

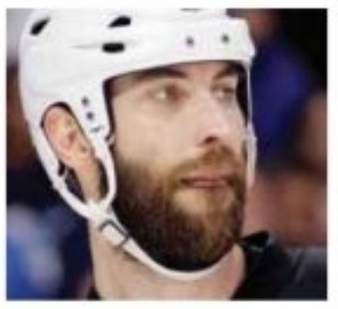
G Tim Thomas

Why we love it: It's meticulous. The big question: Game-day touch-ups? Or hours in front of the mirror every morning?

RW Nathan Horton

Why we love it: It's imperfect. Nothing says "playoff hero" like a beard that's clearly worn just once a year.

D Zdeno Chara



Why we love it: It's thick. If Chara wasn't the B's captain, he'd fit right in wearing plaid and denim at a Maine logging camp.

C Tyler Seguin

Why we love it: It's adorable. Aww, wookit the little wookie! Who barely needs a razor? You do!

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Real estate numbers drop ... again

Experts are not surprised Realtors do say that they see a light at the end of this tunnel, however

Despite high hopes among brokers, recently released numbers indicate a dismal spring real estate market.

Sales of single-family homes in April were down 28 percent compared to April 2010 and condominium sales plummeted 37 percent compared to last year, according to a report from the Warren Group, publisher of Banker & Tradesman. Median prices also dropped for the fifth consecutive month, according to the report.

"I was discouraged by the sales numbers, but not surprised," said John Ford, owner of Ford Realty in Beacon Hill. "Moving forward, I do see some light at the end of the tunnel. For example, the employment numbers in Massachusetts are improving, which historically is a lagging indicator but a significant one to watch regarding the housing market."

There were 2,865 single-family homes sold in April compared to 3,996 in April 2010. Condominium sales fell from 1,834 in April 2010 to 1,160 in April 2011. Year-to-date sales numbers were also down — dropping 16 percent from 2010. Numbers in 2010 were likely boosted by the homebuyer tax credit, which was a strong incentive for buyers.

"The year-over-year numbers are dismal because we're comparing to the homebuyer tax credit selling boom," said Timothy M. Warren Jr., CEO of The Warren Group, in a statement. "We will likely see decreases until the summer."

CHRISTINA WALLACE
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Snapshot

Median sales price of a single-family home

- **2011:** $274,000
- **2010:** $285,000

SOURCE: THE WARREN GROUP

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FOR MORE METRO HOME COVERAGE:
WWW.METRO.US/HOME

▶ Keep on trying, folks. People will buy eventually.

STOCKBYTE

Market view

- **HOMES FOR SALE** 2,389
- **RECENTLY SOLD** 982
- **FORECLOSURES** 540
- **AVERAGE PRICE PER SQUARE FOOT** $849 +27.9% year on year

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THE NEW MASS. HOMESTEAD LAW

By Attorney George Warshaw

If you mention "homestead law" to someone in Massachusetts, their eyes usually roll in puzzlement and ask, "What's that?"

Quite simply, it's a law designed to help homeowners keep their homes when in debt or faced with a judgment they cannot pay. The law does not protect against divorce, taxes, or mortgage foreclosure, but it is very helpful in many situations.

The law prevents a plaintiff, claimant or creditor from selling your principal residence to satisfy a debt, as long the equity in your home is not more than $125,000 or $500,000.

By filing a Declaration of Homestead in the registry of deeds, you protect up to $500,000 of the equity in your home against liens imposed after the time and date of your filing.

If you choose not to file, you still receive $125,000 in protection – but only if you bought your home on or after March 16, 2011. Otherwise, you must file a written declaration to gain any protection.

Filing a declaration is cheap and easy. While it is better to have a lawyer guide you, you can download the form on most registries of deeds websites.

Homesteads filed under the old law remain valid with perhaps one exception. Read the full homestead story at www.georgeinthemetro.com.

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George Warshaw is a real estate attorney and author. He represents buyers and sellers of homes and condos in Massachusetts, and prepares wills, trusts, and estate plans. George welcomes new clients and questions at metro@warshawlaw.com.

CALIFORNIA CLOSETS

▶ Wouldn't it be great to find the shirt you're looking for without a clothing avalanche?

Closet space

It seems there's never enough storage room for your belongings Thinking of re-doing your organizing system? Read these tips from our expert first

If cramming in new spring clothing already proved too much for your overstuffed and disorganized closet, it's time to expand. Nothing tidies a room and makes getting dressed less traumatic than a well-organized, capacious closet. Ready to redo yours? First, think hard about the design, says Melanie Jackson Bergin, California Closets' lead designer.

"A closet is such a personal thing, everyone has different needs and expectations," she says. "Decide what you want. Do you want your thousands of shoes displayed, or do you want to maximize space? If you're limited with how much room you have, then you have to compromise and design for maximum storage."

Jackson gives us tips to create a great closet:

▶ Keep obstructions minimal. For example, if you need a light switch or outlet in the closet, put it on a sidewall that you won't be putting shelves or rails on.

▶ Really pay attention to the height of your storage system. Keep things reachable, but also up high enough so that your clothes won't drag on the floor when you hang them.

▶ Don't clutter your new closet: Sort, save or purge. If you don't love it or if you don't wear it, donate it!

LINDA LABAN
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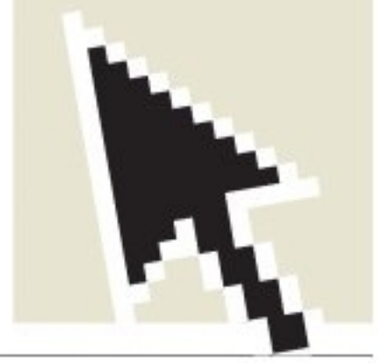
Thinking about building your own?

"Be honest: What is your skill level?" Jackson says. "If you think you can handle it, go for it. The biggest do-it-yourself nightmare we see is when the person didn't find all the studs," she says, referring to the wall's wood posts. "A year goes by and the closet starts to fall apart."

Now for the fun

The fun part is adding interior railing, shelving and drawers. For efficiency, shop online — taking care of delivery, too. Organize-It, CSN stores and ClosetMaid have a gazillion fittings and finishes. Don't forget lighting: Wire in a flush mount with pull cord to eliminate switchs, or use a battery-operated LED Touch Light. Finally, hang your clothes. For more info: **www.californiaclosets.com, www.csnstores.com, www.organizeit.com**



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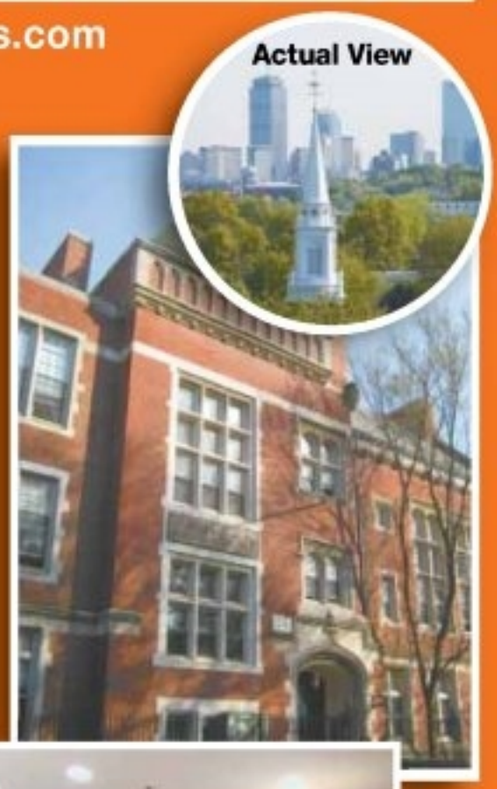

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CLOSETMAID

▶ ClosetMaid's wire shelving products received the SCS Certification for being made from 75 percent recycled content.

Click and organize

Getting organized just got easier. ClosetMaid's new and improved site (www.closetmaid.com), filled with tools and resources, is the answer for those us wanting to take control of our clutter and throw a little elbow grease into the equation. The site has plenty of DIY ideas and projects for all skill sets, a photo gallery of more than 1,500 room images from which to draw ideas, a design tool that creates a rendering of your project and breaks down all the parts so your trip to Home Depot is way more efficient and instructional videos. Plus, if handiwork just isn't your thing, you can log on to hire a design specialist and authorized dealer to do it all for you.

TINA CHADHA

Better call in the experts

Looking to up the ante on your home's value? Painting is the most cost-effective way to do it. If you plan on dipping your brush this June, the start of the official painting season, the ScotchBlue Painter's Tape Pro Prep Patrol team of professional painters are just one conversation away. This Saturday and Sunday, experts are dishing out free advice from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. when you call 855-HLP-PAINT. More of a visual learner? E-mail scotchblueppp@gmail.com with a 150 word or less description of your problem, and you'll be scheduled for a Skype video appointment that'll teach you a step-by-step solution to your painting prep conundrums.

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